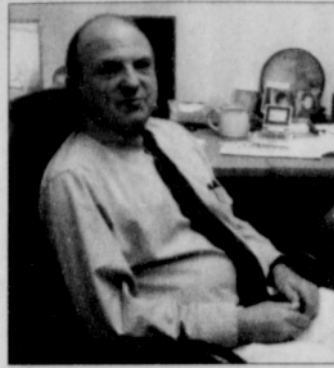


METRO

The Portland Observer



Champion to HIV Positive Patients

Dentists at Russell Street Clinic serve community

See story, page B3

35
years of
community service

SECTION B

Community Calendar

Art Camp Help Needed

Higher Stages Arts Academy, a summer school that teaches drama, computer graphics and video arts, is seeking volunteers that have experience working with youth. Contact Suzanne Marsh at 503-288-5320 or email at whitakerhigherstages@hotmail.com

AIDS Camp Support Sought

Camp Starlight is a program of Cascade AIDS that provides children affected by HIV/AIDS the opportunity to enjoy a caring, safe, recreational camping experience. The camp starts at the end of August, but volunteer camp counselors and donations are needed now. Call 503-223-5907 or visit www.cascadeaids.org

Good in the Neighborhood

This year's multicultural "Good in the Neighborhood" festival will take place on Saturday, June 25 from noon to 9:30 p.m. and Sunday, June 26 from noon to 7:45 p.m. at King School Park on the 4800 block of Northeast Sixth Avenue. International music, arts and crafts, food and more will be featured at the free event. For more information, visit www.goodinthenighborhood.org.

Poetry Reading

Bold Sky Café, 3943 N. Mississippi St., will feature acclaimed writers Dan Raphael, Christyne Sisk and Lyssa Tall Anolik on Thursday, June 29 at 7:30 p.m. For more information, call 503-287-0154 or visit www.bold-sky.com.

Summer Play Days

All summer long come join other families in Irving Park every Wednesday at 10 a.m. to gather with Waldorf School oriented and inspired families who wish to play, snack and get wet in the new waterplay area. For more information, contact www.shiningstarschool.com.

Bradley-Angle House

The Bradley-Angle House needs volunteers to help its outreach against domestic violence. Women of color and bilingual women are encouraged to call. For more information, call 503-282-9940.

Women Mentors

Women in Community Service are seeking volunteer mentors for female offenders at Coffee Creek Correctional Facility. Mentors provide support and encouragement to women transitioning from prison back into the community. Mentors must be female, 24 or older. Training is provided. Call 503-570-6614 for more information.

Get Fit, Stay Healthy!

Sankofa Health Institute offers a free diabetes support group from 6 to 7:30 p.m. every third Thursday at Alberta Simmons Plaza, 6707 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. For more information, call 503-285-2484.

Women in NAACP

Women in NAACP meets from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. the first Saturday of each month at the American Red Cross Building, 3131 N. Vancouver. For questions, call 503-249-6263.

Humboldt Celebration

Come get to know your neighbors and enjoy this event sponsored by Our United Villages. In addition to food and fun, local storyteller-drummer Askari will perform along with singer-songwriter Chris Gabriel. Local businesses have donated food for this event. The celebration will be held on Wednesday, June 29 at the North Star Ballroom located at 635 N Killingsworth CT. at 5 p.m. This event is free and all ages are welcome. For more information contact Corinna Buchholz at 503-546-7499 or corinna@ourunitedvillages.org



PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

First Step Sports Academy Coach E.J. Penn and a few of the many basketball players that visited the academy's first basketball session last week at Irving Park in northeast Portland.

Family Fun Days at Irving Park

BY KATHERINE BLACKMORE
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Local families will attend a series of Family Fun Days at Irving Park in northeast Portland this summer, sponsored by First Step Sports Academy, the Northeast Coalitions of Neighborhoods, Portland Parks and Recreation and other supporters.

Each Friday afternoon from July 15 to Aug. 5, parents, grandparents,

aunts, uncles, cousins, siblings and everyone else under the sun are invited to learn about issues like health, community housing and local services. Health check-up clinics, pamphlets and not-profit representatives will be on hand.

Johnny Gage, a volunteer with the Oregon Action project, said the information and services would help many parents learn about resources they never knew existed. He said it's also

an opportunity to reach more families who need help.

Expectations for the park are raised as well.

The community is taking ownership of the park, Gage said, letting others know that gangs, violence and drugs aren't welcome at Irving. Already, he's noted the absence of four-letter words and people lighting up cigarettes. The atmosphere is respectful.

Hoops for Growing Bodies and Minds

Inexpensive summer basketball clinics offered for youth

BY KATHERINE BLACKMORE
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

It's a sunny day, the first sign that summer is here and school is out for a stretch. The Irving Park basketball courts in northeast Portland are filled with young boys and girls, half the size of their coaches, running back and forth from one hoop to the other, hopping for a shot.

First Step Sports Academy is giving them that shot, with basketball clinics for children at a mere \$8 a week. Compared to the average cost of a basketball clinic at \$90 a week, it's obvious that the academy isn't in it for the money.

"It just came out of having an affordable clinic," said Coach E.J. Penn.

The program is necessary for inner-city children who can't afford the exclusivity and expense of other clinics. It's necessary not only for their growing bodies, but for their growing minds.

"The kids needed something to do with the school budget cuts. The third, fourth and fifth graders are being left out. We wanted to give them something at a young age, to keep them involved instead of just playing Nintendos," Penn said.

For kids like David Jackson-Lyday, 10, basketball means the world — and having the chance to

play in a controlled environment over the summer is imperative.

"I love basketball. A lot of my family members play. It makes me feel better," Jackson-Lyday said.

The All-American Youth Basketball Clinic is entirely a community effort, made up of volunteers from First Step Sports Academy, Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods, Inc., Youth Employment Center and others. While jerseys, park use and basketballs were provided by the Portland Parks and Recreation, funding comes completely from neighbors wanting their children to see a better life.

"We want more kids to have an effect on the community. These kids are at a vulnerable stage in their lives where they learn good or bad. We want to take advantage of that by instilling good," Penn said.

The coaches use basketball simply as a tool for inner growth, presenting a different theme each week for the children to strive for. Some ideas include discipline, sharing, attitude and respect.

"We watch them on the

continued ▼ on page B6

Libraries Offer Summer Reading Games encourage literacy

Turn off the T.V. this summer and keep reading! Children and teens throughout Multnomah County can now visit any Multnomah County Library location to sign up for the annual Summer Reading program. Last year, more than 47,000 children and teens participated.

An active summer reading schedule is a proven activity that narrows the achievement gap between more and less economically advantaged students, according to Katie O'Dell, the library system's reading promotions coordinator.

"Our outreach staff will bring the Summer Reading program to federal lunch sites, housing authority locations and low-income childcare centers. We're going to reach far out beyond the library walls into the communities where participating in a summer reading program is not a tradition, not even a known possibility," O'Dell said.

The program, which is structured as a game, encourages players to read and earn incentives for each block of time they read. Youth of all ages, including very young children who are being read to by a parent or caregiver, can participate.

Teens can enroll in a separate program this year that was designed just for them.

For more information, visit the library's website at www.multcolib.org/summer/. A listing of free summer programs at the library is available at www.multcolib.org/events/.



The new Club Level of the Rose Garden Arena will include two luxurious lounges with plasma televisions, couches and bars reserved for Club Level season ticket holders.

Rose Garden Arena Gets Facelift

Improvements planned for seating, lounges

The Rose Garden Arena will take on a new look soon, with improvements being made across the board to seating and lounge areas.

Global Spectrum, the new owner of the arena, recently announced that phase one of the upgrades begins next month to the Courtside Lounge, the Club Level, the Suite Level and the back of house preparation facilities.

Inside the arena bowl, new sports lighting will be added to enhance Trail Blazer games and other sporting events. Approximately 10,000 binoculars will be installed under individual seats in the Club Level, Suite Level and 300 Level.

"This summer is the start of a program

of renovations that will continue in the years to come as we strive to return the Rose Garden to the top of the echelon in the industry. Our improvements are both physical and conceptual," said Michael Scanlon, general manager of the Rose Quarter.

One of the world's most well respected and creative sports architectural firms, Brisbin Brook Beynon, has been selected for the arena renovation. Beynon is currently overseeing the massive renovation of Madison Square Garden in New York City and was also responsible for the acclaimed arena renovations in Calgary and Edmonton in Canada, as well as the new, state-of-the-art facilities in Toronto, Canada, Helsinki, Finland, and Hamburg, Germany.

Club Level improvements are planned to include two luxurious club lounges on the east and west sides of the Rose Garden featuring all-inclusive food stations during all Trail Blazers games.

This level will be "gutted and stripped of its existing look" and transformed into a modern area exclusive to Club Level Season Ticket holders with plasma televisions, couches, lounges, carpeting, and bars.

Ovations Food Services, the concessionaire for the Rose Quarter, is expanding the food options that will be featured at the Club Level food stations to include menu items typically found at lavish restaurants in addition to standard arena fare.

Planned courtside improvements include the demolition of the existing Courtside Lounge and construction of a new 5,500 square foot private club on the event level with easy access for courtside guests at Trail Blazers games and availability for VIP functions throughout the year.

The construction will not affect any event at the Rose Garden and all events and meetings remain scheduled as planned.